

I

Out from Life, timeless, Pure and True existence, a new daughter emerges: Sophia, naive and beautiful, dreamy and restless.

Her betrothed, already designated by her Father, was merely pending on her maturation for the Union to be consummated.

But in Life, as it exists outside of narrative, time is not a factor.

Sophia would have to yet design her own maturing fable, together with her promised lover, so that from the harmony between masculine and feminine, not only their joint adulthood would come to be completed, but also so that new realms would be emanated, enriching Life and fulfilled and Sacred Individuality.

However, at the core of Sophia, the seed of a shadow was hatching. Invisible to all except her Father, it hid far deep within the glitter and pure fragrances that made up her mien. So beautiful and pure was she, why could she not create her own maturation? Why would she accept her Father's choice and promise of the groom, when she could dream up her own herself?

She would do better. She deserved better.

She considered that from her fountain, so beautiful, only perfection could flow and only perfection would satisfy her. She would present her couple to her Father and He, recognizing in him a beauty only comparable to His daughter Sophia, could do nothing but admire her, accede to that Union instead and cancel the previous wedding arrangement.

And, in that fashion, Sophia started dreaming.

She dreamt of a partner as beautiful as her, as radiant, as perfect. But what did she know of perfection? What do the beautiful know of their own beauty, if not by interaction with the other? What do the beautiful know of its source? What do the beautiful know of themselves, as they perceive their perfection, without ever having seen the ugly?

But Sophia dreamt on.

In her lucid dream, she travelled across the universe of herself, orbiting thoughts and seeking within that other one that would become her couple. The more she abandoned,

in oblivion, the idea of the wedding to her promised, submerged as she was in her own promise of independent perfection, the more the dark sprout awoke in unexplored and remote spaces, through her own ignorance. A peculiar vanity called out for the Shadow. A repressed toxicity gathered in it, a latent insatiability, a muffled insurgence.

Her Father saw her and her dream. He saw her intent. Aware of the inevitable fate of such a path, understanding also the destiny that would arise from beyond the fatality of her alienation, fraught with the Love He is himself, her Father decided to allow it to happen. The birth of a new Shadow, profoundly powerful for being generated by her daughter's own quality, would be also, however, an opportunity.

Sophia halts, at last, near an idea in an outlying area of her being. It failed to be the most beautiful idea she had already passed by, but that image had something bizarre about it, something inexplicably attractive. It seemed like a Man. Imposing, strong, intelligent. He would have to be perfect, however, to fulfill the requisites to become her potential couple, to be presentable to her Father. With her own will, she imbued him with beauty and sighed. She applied to him her own consciousness, so that he could recognize her, so that he could see in her his eternal mate. His eyes opened and found hers. Sophia fell in love, naively and childishly. Her dreamt partner merely reflected, as a mirror would, her own awareness. He saw her as she would, because he was, in fact, her, in a desired dream. That being was not sufficient, but in Sophia's core a boiling passion was now simmering away all her poor sense. Due to that, she wanted to give him more, to ensure her that her eternal partner would be presentable to her Father. And so Sophia focused on that dreamt Man. And Sophia defined his forms and stipulated his qualities. And Sophia, so focused, burning with callow Passion, got lost.

The sprout that hatched off the shadowy seed was increasingly growing, the more her Passion's fire inflamed imprudent Sophia. It was this impure, transgressing, heat, from the flames of vanity and lust, that announced her fate, her path. Shadow and profane blaze, set together in a radiant body. Thus proceeded the Shadow, in accordance with its destiny: while Sophia was abstracted in her dreaming, the Shadow melted, surreptitiously, into her now adored illusory partner. In the mirror of those eyes, until

then mere empty reflections, a sensation of existence was then lit. The mark left in Sophia by that gaze absorbed her and imprisoned her in that dream as a shackle. She asked her self "why wake up, if there their love would be eternal"...

The Father summoned her promised groom and explained what had happened. He told him that he would allow the inevitable developments to ensue, for none of the evils it would cause would ever be irreversible and also because there would then arise an example of consequences and a narrative instrument that would help the maturation of Life. Sophia's groom, whom had not been bereft by this incident of that status, nor of his wish to unite with his promised bride, agreed and understood. He suggested then to help her in the dream that, they both knew, soon would become a nightmare. His request was accepted.

II

From her own mind, like a cyst, an infection, a pustule, a dense and water-filled world began to take shape by Sophia's passion for the Shadow. In it, she and the Shadow-turned-man molded their perfect garden, that would be eternally theirs to inhabit, together. So entranced was she, the beautiful and disgraced Sophia, that she failed to see the Shadow behind the partner she idealized. Because of that, each of his whims were accepted and manifested, without question.

"I want light, so that our perfection can be admired!" - he clamored at Sophia. And Sophia, the luminous one, the divine, the ill-fated, dreamt light for his sake. And thereupon a light appeared in their garden. It was a dense, impure light, drenched in the fire of insane passion. And that light, due to its compatible nature, pleased the Shadow-man she dreamt as her partner - "This light shall be my symbol!"

And then he told her that it should be separated from its absence, the original darkness of his garden, so that it would not become omnipresent and they could therefore apportion that realm within time: day would be his, as that impure fire that now lit up his gaze was extremely pleasing to him, and night would be hers, for she originally dreamt it that way, even if such darkness had been dictated by the Shadow, yet invisible, behind her worship. Sophia so proceeded, and light, until then immobile, now travelled across the waters.

Given that water distorted the light, objecting to his unperturbed contemplation of his fiery coat-of-arms, he commanded Sophia to create a gap in the waters and provide room for that light to move upon and announce his perfection. Thereon, she moved away the water and created an empty space within. Positioning himself at the center of that empty bubble, the Shadow-man then named the water above him as heavens. Then he told Sophia to make dry ground below, so that it could sustain their garden of eternal perfection. A dry portion of land manifested from amidst the waters below him, moving them aside to form seas, lakes and rivers - which greatly pleased her shadowy partner.

"In no garden are missing plants, trees, grass!" - as an order, the shout echoed its implicit command and Sophia, ever more fascinated by her creation, complied: grass, trees and plants sprouted off the dry land for the first time, in the illusion of her fallen dream. He grinned, pleased.

As there were now two temporal realms in the creation of Sophia and her Shadow, he commanded her to light up speckles of light in the waters above them, in the heavens, so that they would be a clock and calendar to measure the right time for the worship of the perfection, beauty and power of each of them. Happy, the Shadow nodded.

With the scenery now composed for their eternal garden, it was then necessary to fill it with a kind of life that was able to contemplate, admire and worship them. Fulfilling every caprice of her Shadow, son and lover, Sophia created the animals of the seas and the animals of the lands and the animals of the skies. Some pretty, others deformed, in accordance to the volatility of the will of her partner Shadow-man. All of them, however, Sophia noticed, lacked the glitter of individuality, as they were nothing more than automatons, with no choice but to obey the will programmed in them by her.

"My love, my perfect eternal partner, so beautiful and strong, all of them lack awareness and choice to really contemplate and admire our magnificence." - Sophia whispered at him, convinced that their shared perfection could be nothing but admired by individuals contemplating them in their garden. For the first time, the Shadow's countenance frowned.

With his elegant face shut in a grimace of discontent, by the perception that the created beings would not admire him by choice, a dark thought emerges from the depths of the Shadow that made him - "Let us then create beings in our image, so that they can choose as we choose! And so that through their own choice, they can worship us with the gladness and admiration inherent to our perfect elevation!"

"In our image!" - confirming the wish expressed by her lover, Sophia dreamt of a man and a woman in their likeness. The bodies, perfect, the faces, molded to the detail. With

that, she allowed her shadowy and beautiful lover to smile again - "They will be the masters of all creation down there, for we will govern our garden from this throne, among the lights." - he proclaimed.

But when they opened their eyes, that man and that woman had no vitality in their empty stare, no awareness, no such choice as he needed to see in them. He felt frustration for the first time.

III

All the while, her promised and the Father had been observing the events of the dream narrative. A nightmare to be soon, they knew. Following an agreed arrangement between them, Sophia's groom touched her sleeping existence.

With the touch of her promised, a sudden clarity temporarily prevailed over Sophia. Thoughts manifested in herself that were not from herself, but originated in Fatherly inspiration.

"Offer from your breath the life to the new creation that resembles you, and I will give mine, so that they can be our admirers through the profundity of a perfect awareness - in our image!" - she stated, but with words that dripped off her unknowingly.

Her lover, convinced by the presented argument, blew into the mouth of the recently created man and the woman. His shadow imbued both. Then, it was Sophia's turn to offer them her breath. However, as she so did, she blew not only a part of herself into them, but also a part of her promised, who was still making contact from beyond the dream realm. The man and the woman awoke and as they did they saw their condition with a clarity unexpected to the masters of the dream creation; they saw that they were enslaved there, in that dream, in that illusion of a garden filled with empty love, naked as they were of the Glory that is natural to their Existence. As they gazed upon the couple that had created them, they spoke with voices brimming with wisdom:

"You, Sophia, the deep sleeper, charmed as you are by your own obscure reverie, have created, by your vanity and lust, the antithesis of what you truly wished for."

"And you, Shadow, will today get to know your nature and your name, for I have come before you and know who you are. These will be your chains; Yaldabaoth is your name, and you are nothing but a fantasy restricted to the dreamscape of Sophia. You have created nothing, even though she did it for you, as it is she who is the dreamer here and you merely her lascivious fascination, born out of youthful impatience. This dream was destined to be dreamt, for on it and on what happens in it depends the maturation of Purity. Sophia's Father - our Father, not yours - the True, has been observing you from the beginning and has shut you in this ever-repeating narrative: you will struggle for a

creation that will never be yours and you will subsist between the near-victory and the near-defeat. You cannot die, contrarily to the men under your scourge, but you also cannot live for you are Shadow. Your end will only come on the day in which the dream, the nightmare, permanently concludes. Until then, you are condemned to repeat the same History."

Not the face, nor the body, nor even the voice of Yaldabaoth, now that he was conscious of his name, nothing in him resisted the revelation of the Shadow that was him. He was now misshapen, monstrous, grotesque.

"How dare you mock your creator?! From nothing I have made you and to nothing I return you!!" - a shout and a thunder later, no man or woman resided in the garden of that dream anymore. Of them, only ash.

"Do you see how I am the only one?! The true one?! I am supreme in all universes! There is no other god but me!" - he clamored, gazing into Sophia's eyes as if into a mirror.

Sophia replied, perceiving now the reality of what she had created: "You are not! There is a True Supreme, my Father and there is a son of His that is Gracious and Just and Pure and he has been Promised to me." - and in that instant, displayed on the waters of the heavens, a lightning bolt burns into Yaldabaoth's memory the image of the son of Truth.

"I condemn you, traitor! At my side you have created the perfection of this garden that was to be the eternal refuge for our love, but your passion has extinguished and in its place I see now only disdain! Why did you want to hide away the Shadow that was brought forth out of you?! See me now, for you shall be like me, but live down below, with the crawling creations. Your words will be poison! Your tongue forked, such as you split Shadow from Light! Your Light shall I now wear henceforth as a majestic Golden Fleece and your Shadow, my genesis, shall be banished from this throne! You shall be Adversary to this throne and for ever damned to my punishment!!"

With this said, Yaldabaoth tore the Light away from Sophia and wore it over himself, masking himself in it, bearing the Light of True Glory. The remaining darkness, brought

now to the attention of the mirror of Sophia's spirit, caused in her an intense dread. The beautiful and perfect Sophia, due to her vain and irresponsible purposes, has generated a Dark that now came to the fore. Terrorized by her monstrosity, she now fell from the throne among the stars of her dreamt garden, of her nightmare. She fell and as she fell, a hatred towards the one she previously dreamed to be her perfect partner, began to grow. She fell and she fell. And as she fell, she shattered onto the earth and impregnated it with herself, with her hate and her thirst for the death of her now antagonist Yaldabaoth. But this hatred was not alone inside her, just as it was the case with Yaldabaoth. What fed such bitter hatred was still the fond memory of a love that prevented a decisive and last victory of any of them over the other. Her body was still being molded to his wishes, at the same time as it tried to destroy his domains. By many names would she be known among the languages of the men that would come to inhabit that dreamt Earth. Among the many others, the name Gaia. To Yaldabaoth, she would be his Satan, or Opposer. The fallen Sophia, mother of creation, would thus be also Mater, matter, over which he held subduing power.

Alone now and unrecognizable, Yaldabaoth attended to his defenses, creating automatons he called Archons, due to his wish that they came to be the Authorities and Principalities in his name. They would be his Angels, messengers of his will and soldiers under his flag.

Then, he decided to contemplate the enigma that stood in his way: that image, from the Son of Truth, remained engraved in himself like an affront to his sovereignty. Unable to dismantle a memory by himself, he considered imitating it, to create a son of his own in that precise image, to demonstrate not only to the fallen Sophia, that had betrayed him and whose tunic of Glory he was now wearing, but also to the Father of Truth that he was sovereign, if not over all existence, assuredly over that universe.

IV

Yaldabaoth, with the help of his Archon automatons, designed and created a new man, in the likeness of the lightning bolt that had forever been burned into his mind. As he was not full master of the dream, he used the matter Sophia had dissolved into becoming as raw material. As much as he attempted to mold perfection in the likeness of the image of the Son of Truth, he, Yaldabaoth, the False, was merely being able to build mortality. The bodies would not last, they would grow old and worn, they would sicken, they would depend on daily care and maintenance simply to hold together, during the time they were able to subsist. Mortality and time, measured by the same celestial luminaries he himself had commanded Sophia to create, were two curses that befell him. Nothing he would make would ever last. The strongest castles, merely sand in the waves of time. The proudest empires, mere ruins uncovered by wind, revealing his inefficiency. But Yaldabaoth had to swallow his own doubts, his fears. He, as a Shadow, knew better than anyone the meaning of repressing that which opposes, in order to preserve the survival of his own existence, regardless of how vain. Because of that, he labored and insisted, with the full cooperation of his Archon automatons, and he created a man of matter, made of earth and water and fire and air. So that there would never be any doubts regarding who was his creator and lord, Yaldabaoth took it upon himself to name him: Adam, for he was a man made of Adamah, of earth. Then, following the same procedure, he created the woman, to be his companion so that he would not suffer the same loneliness Yaldabaoth now did. As she would be the life of man and as she would be able to provide new lives through her childbearing, she called her Eve, as she was Chava, giver of life.

And Adam and Eve awoke as Archons, obedient automatons. Frustrated by the imperfection of his creation, now that he was alone and abandoned, betrayed even, by the lover who had given him life, he clamored for her in despair:

"Oh Sophia!! Why have you betrayed me in my most vulnerable moment?! Had you been with me, as you were when it all began, we would have made beings filled with the same perfection that brought us together!! Presently, abandoned, nothing more can I build than statues with no volition!!"

Sophia's Promised, her Groom still, knew from the Father, the Truth, which part he was to play in that newborn infernal universe. From outside of time, he was able to answer Yaldabaoth's despair, so that, at the end of the cyclic narrative, all Truth he had seized from Sophia could be returned; and she, matured. Using the Verb, he told Yaldabaoth, the False: Blow into your new Adam and into your new Eve, offer them from you their sentience. If you so proceed, at the end of the end of times, you shall attain Eternal Peace.

Yaldabaoth heard the voice with surprise and a mix of affection and rage. He was made out of passion. Passion for vanity, for pride. But Yaldabaoth knew, as soon as he heard that voice, that he had no choice but to follow its advice. Thusly, he did blow into Adam and Eve. And mixed with his dark essence, the entirety of the Golden Fleece he had stolen from Sophia was blown into them too and Yaldabaoth discovered himself naked once more.

"Betrayed again!! Why have you given me life if you take away all that is beautiful and elevated and perfect?!" - the False cried.

"Beauty and Perfection are qualities of Truth. You will have your opportunity, as will Gaia that you banished, to give yourself in, purified, into the arms of the divine Sophia that created you. In that embrace, you will be returned to your rightful place and you will then know Truth and Life." - the Promised told him.

"You want to mock me!! I that was her groom and was to be her eternal lover here in this garden!! I that designed all the creation herein!! You wish to make me a slave?! Here I shall be King!! Rather a King in this hell you condemn me to, than a slave in the so-called life and purported truth you preach!?" - Yaldabaoth refused, as he wiped his tears - "I may not be able to leave this prison, but I pledge to dedicate my entire existence to Sophia's continued banishment!! As well as the entrapment of your inquisitive children, oh treacherous proclaimers of truth and virtue!! Many shall enter, enticed by my wonders, none shall leave!?"

Adam and Eve had awoken in the meantime, dwelling in bodies and in souls caught

between the monstrous shade and the Living Essence of Divine Sophia. They were beholding, in fear, their abhorrent creator. With a single gesture, Yaldabaoth put them back to sleep.

"You will yet come to see that I am who I am!!" - the shadow's words erupted as a decree.

"Your creation is condemned to mortality. Just as you stole the Golden Fleece from Sophia, so will the bodies you have created consume each other, robbing one another of their flesh, be it animal or plant, breathe they air or water, merely to subsist until, inevitable, death comes. Hunger will take over their minds and will drive them mad if they do not sate it. This is the reality of your kingdom and the curse you cast upon yourself! Everything you create shall dissolve in the waters that will cleanse the earth away. All that was uncreated is, however, eternal and will evade your claws." - the Promised affirmed to him.

The silence that followed announced Yaldabaoth's own decision on his destiny.

V

Having contemplated his fate, he then proceeded to shape an appropriate throne for himself; it was to be a magnificent garden, in the likeness of what had been imagined for the whole universe. It would also be walled in, to prevent intrusions but also, and especially, desertions. A kingdom within the realm, guarded by his army of Archons. All details considered to prevent his prisoners from escaping, just as he could not escape. He would do unto them just as it was done unto him, and with such intent he thus placed in this lush gardened confinement his new Adam and Eve, bearing both his shadow and Sophia's Golden Fleece. He would guard them as a dragon guards his treasures of gold.

He then awoke them again, when everything was ready and in place, and, as he confirmed the dread in their eyes as they beheld him, told them: "I am your creator and benefactor. I have made this garden for you, so that you can exist herein and love me within your hearts and your souls, that belong to me, by loving my creation. Always comply with my designs, observe the cult I offer you, and I will be a benevolent God to you, as my only demand is obedience."

Gradually, in the time that followed, the man and the woman explored the garden. With lush abundance of trees and bushes, they found food to sate their hunger, an overwhelming sensation that would cyclically prevail over their bodies. They had to eat, to consume life to maintain their own. They ate, therefore, the fruits of the trees and the shrubs and, even, the roots and the seeds and the tubers. Everything in the garden was edible, but nothing would really satisfy their bodies. The more they ate, the more they felt something was missing, as if it was an open curse within their bellies, demanding the death of all creation by consuming it. Nonetheless, in spite of this growing impression, Adam and Eve obeyed and remained in a sort of mental fog, a constant drowsiness, still, happy and abstracted, living in the Eden garden - the name given by Yaldabaoth, considering it an adequate label for such a pleasurable place.

One day, however, as he was supervising his Paradise, his walled prison garden,

Yaldabaoth noticed a Tree he had not created, or planted, or knew. He tried to pull it out, but it burned his hand as he attempted. He tried to banish it from existence with his word, but it remained unmoving. He tried to destroy it, by fire and by acid and by slashing, but nothing would affect that invading Tree.

He contemplated it, amid fascination and angst - for anything unexpected awakens the fear of Judgment in the False - and he seemed to see, in the leaves dancing in the wind, the undulating hairs of Sophia. Its branches, when viewed from afar, resembled the visage revealed and etched into his memory by the lightning bolt of his envy. The trunk was like the scepter with which, he knew, the Father governed the kingdom of Truth and Life.

Nothing would hit the Tree, nothing would touch it. Could, however, Adam and Eve? Being offspring of the monster and of the fallen Life, could they have power over the Tree?

He awaited, expectantly, the appropriate moment.

- "Adam?"
- "Yes, my Master?"
- "That tree over there, the peculiar one... touch it."
- "I will, Master."

Adam thus approached the luminous Tree and he seemed to recognize something familiar, but forgotten, on it. He hesitated.

- "Touch it, Adam."

The man then extended his arm and his fingers touched the Tree. The glittering leaves were whispers of Truth, that brought questions to his mind.

He was not burnt, he suffered no damage. Yaldabaoth was displeased and concerned by this.

- "Master?"

- "Yes, Adam?"
- "What am I doing here?"

Fury then possessed the monster as he cast Adam across the ground, such was the daring behind the transgressive inquiry. Eve came out from behind a shrubbery and went to assist her mate.

Was a touch on that Tree all it took to seed doubt and discord over his benevolence? Then the Tree would never again be touched.

- "I lay on you my decree!! Never will you touch this tree, nor will even ever approach it. Its leaves are gall and its fruits, poison. If you ever do, you will certainly die!!"

The trauma was duly imprinted onto the couple, who abode by the prohibition proclaimed by their wrathful captor. Their lives proceeded along that same empty routine within the sublime garden that entertained their death. Notwithstanding, after the incident with the Tree that had intruded into their prison - and especially the doubts that had come to the fore when Adam touched it - now inhabited them a need, a discomfort about the essence of their presence there, of their existence as man and woman made flesh and bone, made time and death. That feeling was a constant company they were never really able to dismiss. The discomfort of these doubts brought up a feeling of amnesia in relation to its answers, as if these were already known to them, only forgotten. Yaldabaoth's prohibition did nothing but to feed that doubt.

VI

A Sacred Eagle, messenger of the Father, had descended for the first time to the earth, domain of the now fallen Sophia. Her suffering had transformed the world into a hellish place, uninhabitable to the creation of her shadowy but yet admired antagonist. The fire that now covered that world would not burn its wings and nor could the monstrous and deformed snakes touch it. The message had, thus, reached its destination; at the center of the world, buried in a mix of resentment and possessiveness, the condemned read her Father's missive.

- "As you see what you have become, you are filled with shame and self pity. Because of that, you have turned that world into a sea of fire, so that no surface of water or mirror forces you to look upon your own disgraced state. You dwell in that condition, stuck between hatred and the will to possess, especially that which you thought you lost. You will read these words with disdain, but will remember them when the Moment comes. You have lost nothing, nothing was taken from you. This world is you, Yaldabaoth is you, the man and the woman are parts of you. The nightmare tribulation will linger only until you accept this truth, so that you may then return, Whole, Adult, to the Truth and Life that are your Home.

Given that, and as your Father, I ask of you, my daughter, that you make your world inhabitable for the man and the woman, for soon they will abandon the paradise of Eden, which is their prison. They will replace Yaldabaoth's prison for yours, that much is certain, but the time will eventually come when you will be redeemed by your Groom and, alongside your own Spirit, also the pieces of your Soul that had awakened to Truth and Life in humanity, through the Word that will make them remember.

Many are the shards of your shattered Soul caught in this repeating narrative, and all of them will be retrieved back and redeemed, having become Adults by reuniting the Lost with the Found. They will turn and twist around the narrative's parts and roles, being the world the stage that you will prepare for them. You shall then be both Mother and Stepmother to them. You will be the welcoming embrace and nurturing bosom, yet also the covetousness of the same sick love that dictated your downfall and the ruthlessness of the punishment you sustain. Hereby I will offer you, with my Royal Seal, this Promise:

when all the cycles of the narrative are concluded - as time is but the perception of those who are living in the story, the dream, the nightmare - you will again be the beautiful Sophia, yet now Adult, Whole and Wise.

Rise up, therefore, one last time to the heaven from where Yaldabaoth, your shadow dream, banished you. Go up there by my decree and safe passage. Climb up the Tree of Life I have planted from your own seed and tell the naked couple being held there to eat from the fruits of the Tree of Wisdom, that your Groom sprouted there. They will thus be banished to you, to your world, to your womb. At the end of each cycle of the narrative, the Living shards will be separated from the dead and rescued. At the end of all the cycles, there will be none but the Living and you and Yaldabaoth and all the other fragments will be United and retrieved.

I await you with tenderness and Love."

Black tears smudged the letter.

It was thusly an inevitable consequence that, when the Serpent went up the Tree of Life and entered the paradise of Eden through the roots of the Tree of Wisdom, Eve heard her call.

VII

It was but a whisper first, one that only she could hear, from among the bushes. A familiar voice that resembled a breeze in her ear.

- "Eve..."

She looked in the soil, where her feet rested, she looked among the leaves, she looked among the clouds, way above her head.

- "Eve..."

She felt compelled to find who was summoning her, but there was a sense of transgression about this search, given Yaldabaoth's propensity to wrath.

- "Eve..."

At last, as bizarrely expected as it was, Eve realized that the voice came from somewhere on the Forbidden Tree. She felt an omen, a premonition of shock: her following act would be the most significant among created women, for Good, for Evil and for Liberation.

Eve then approached the Forbidden Tree and replied:

- "I am here."

- "Eve... Yaldabaoth deceived you. Neither will the fruit of this Tree, which is Wisdom, kill you, nor will he ever do it himself, for his pride."

- "But Yaldabaoth is strong and generous with us. If we abide by his rules, nothing will be lacking here for us."

- "It will lack, oh Eve carrier of the Seed, forever the Freedom that is rightfully yours."

- "Freedom? What is... freedom?"

- "Eve and her Adam are but mere bodies that divide that which is one. The Life that resides within you, woman, that resides within man, is my lost Life. In you both smolders the Divine Spark, the Sacred Fire, that I held and wasted as a gift to my love, that infernal passion that bewilders me, as a gift to Yaldabaoth. That Fire that dwells within you both is the Freedom of Life and Truth, away from this curse in which I become Mother and Matter. Yet my hatred for him is only comparable to my feeling of desire for the partner I dreamt into existence. I cannot allow him to harness you, but I cannot set you free, for I have lost the Key to the Dream."

- "I know not of what you speak. Life, Freedom. Yet something inside me, be it the Fire you see or not, turns me to your words in belief."
- "Go, then, Eve, and call your Adam here. For you, he will awaken, as he bites from the fruit of this Tree."
- "I will go, then, to call Adam. Yet first, will you show yourself to my eyes, so that I can recognize you?"
- "Eve... I am but a sad and grotesque image now, so far from the Beauty and Grace of my erstwhile state."
- "But I insist, for if I am to follow your advice, I have to behold you for myself first."
- "Very well, if you so insist, Eve; but know that if you gaze into my eyes, you will see the mirrored reflection what is worst in you and you will be cursed for knowing me and having listened to my voice."
- "I cannot go call Adam without having looked upon you first..."

From one of the branches of the glittering Tree, a Serpent uncoils and exposes itself. Her stare, hypnotizing, her bearing, frightening.

- "You wanted to see, well see me then. It is only just that you know your mother and that it is from me that you receive your teaching."
- "You are nothing in the likeness of what exists here. Grotesque, indeed, but you retain a certain glamour in your eyes."

The Serpent contorts and sighs.

- "What will happen when we eat from this Tree?"
- "Here, you are in the kingdom of Yaldabaoth, his garden in Heaven, that was to be our lovers bed chambers. The Hell I was banished to is but a lake of fire, smoke and dust, where only the strongest and ruthless subsist. But Eve and her Adam will be between Heaven and Hell, in an intermediate place where they can choose their own allegiance and make covenants with either one or the other." - a long sigh as she twirls her body around the branch - "Perhaps one day our Passion will be greater than our Hatred and Heaven and Hell will come together. How will eternity be then?" - her dreamy eyes

watered the scales around them with salt.

- "Whatever is to come, oh Serpent that claims to be our mother, I know, knowing not how, that in the end you too will have Redemption and, returned to you, the Freedom whose loss torments you."

Recognizing the tone of a familiar Promise in Eve's voice, the Serpent felt excitement for the Prophetic words and tightened her grip on the branch that held her, as she released her emotional state, silently.

Eve then left, seeking her Adam.

Adam was resting under the stars, stretched on a smooth rock that supported his back comfortably. He was finding himself thinking often about that Tree, about the moment in which he touch it and what he sensed. He was noticing how similar was its glitter to the sparkle of the stars above. During the moment he touched it, he sensed, for just an instant, that he was way greater than his body, surpassing even that garden of Eden, even Yaldabaoth and his universe that engulfed him.

Nonetheless, as he was lying there on the smooth rock that comfortably supported his back, the world around him was solid still and impervious to his inquisitive incursions. Two of the stars from the heavens above now shined with Living radiance. Around them a tender, adventurous smile was formed. It was Eve.

- "Adam, come with me."

- "Eve? Where is there to go with you? What does it matter if we are together here, there or elsewhere? What significance has the place where you lie next to me, if everyplace here greets us? This rock here, where I now lie, wants to soothe me, the breeze that blows over the grass wants to comfort me. Why go with you, if here or there we will be the same?"

Eve did not respond. Her expression revealed a touch of gravity, even when still smiling, that Adam had never seen before in her partner. Such novelty compelled him to follow her will, presaging a vaster significance to that request than a mere relocation. Adam

stood up and faced her.

- "Where will I go with you, then?"

Eve took his hand and led him, step by step, as if in a slow rhythmic dance, a breathing that came and went well beyond their bodies, towards the Forbidden Tree.

VIII

From beyond the wide leafage that bordered it, the glittering splendor was already announcing its presence. That wonderful image was more than its own shape - it was a pure flame that, spiked into the garden as a stake through the heart, revealed that Yaldabaoth merely held superfluous domain over his realm. Dream sovereignty belonged to the Father and, henceforth, anything that was to occur in this creation fantasy that trapped his shattered Daughter, had now His correcting Hand.

- "Eat from the Tree, Adam, eat its fruit." - Eve told him to his ear.
- "But Eve, Yaldabaoth forbade us. If we transgress, we will die."

At that moment, the Serpent revealed herself from one of the branches of the Tree.

- "You shall not die, Adam, nor will Eve, your woman, for you, like all that is creation, are already dead and already Living. Yaldabaoth decreed this Tree as forbidden out of fear and not by his power!"

Adam, intimidated by the Serpent's appearance, steps back.

- "Fear not, for I am no threat to those I have created myself. Eat from this Fruit, Adam, and you will be free."

The Serpent whips one of the glimmering apples from its branch and the Fruit falls on the soil beneath. Adam looks at it and hesitates.

- "Adam?! Eve?! Where are you?!" - the thundering voice of Yaldabaoth echoed across the garden.

- "Yaldabaoth!! He approaches!!"

Adam held then, in that instant, the Fruit in his right hand and Eve's hand in his left. He pulled her and sought refuge behind a tall shrubbery. The Serpent hid again behind the foliage on the Tree of Wisdom. Yaldabaoth then appeared and approached.

- "Adam?! Eve?! Why do you hide?! Do you consider me incapable of finding you in my own garden?!"

Then, Yaldabaoth clicked his fingers and summoned to him his most recent creation. A group of empty vague copies of himself, made in his image and that of Adam, responded to the call and presented before their master.

- "Bring me Adam and Eve, my Princes, my Angels."

With that command, the hunters set off in all directions, tracking for signs of their prey. Confronted with their imminent discovery and consequent punishment, Adam stared deep into Eve's eyes and found that among the darkness of its pupil, a Spark resided. Decided, he look again at his right hand and, in a fluid motion, carried the Fruit to his mouth and took a bite.

The foundations that sustained the garden shook violently just once. Everyone halted. Yaldabaoth yelled in wrath - "ADAM!! EVE!!"

Eve was holding Adam's left hand firmly. In his eyes, opened, and on his lips, ajar, emerged the same Glitter as the Tree emanated. Adam SAW HER.

If Adam was to die for her, then she would die with Adam, she thought, and immediately plucked the bitten Fruit from his hand and took a bite of her own. The foundations of the garden shook once more. To her own surprise, Eve had not died, but awoke, as did Adam.

Yaldabaoth's Angels found them, by their luminosity. However, that Glitter wounded them and their eyes - so they could only point towards their hiding place, keeping their distance. Yaldabaoth knew then and there what had occurred.

- "Betrayers of my edict!! You have condemned your puny existences with this transgression!!"

Adam and Eve emerged from behind the shrub and revealed themselves to Yaldabaoth and his legion of Angels. Eve then noticed the eyes of the Princes on her body; their repugnant tongues wetting the monstrous fangs that made up their mouths, in desires for lust with her flesh and her blood. They were truly made in the Shadow's likeness.

- "Adam!! Why did you eat from the Tree??"

Adam did not answer. Instead, the glimmer in his eyes remained unchanged and serene.

- "Eve!! Confess your sin to your creator!!"

Eve, shining with Wisdom in her eyes, also did not respond.

Watching the deadlock, the Serpent reemerged from the Tree of Wisdom and faced Yaldabaoth. The Love and the Hatred for her dreamt one, filled her, again.

- "YOU!!" - rumbled Yaldabaoth - "You have broken the banishment I imposed upon you and came here to incite my children against me, their father!"

The Serpent, Gaia, the fallen Sophia by Yaldabaoth's command - a command she had offered him to make upon her - could not remain immune to the passion that connected her to that godly character, despite hating such dependency intensely.

- "Truth! I have only told them the truth, which they now know! You have lied to them! You told them they would die if they ate from the Tree!"

- "And they will die!! I shall destroy that which I created and am god to!!"

Bursting in wrath, Yaldabaoth scorched the couple, Adam and Eve, incinerating their flesh, shattering their bones, vaporizing their blood. Regardless; in their place, the Glitter remained, forming their bodies, their features and visage. Yaldabaoth stepped back, agape and frightened.

- "SEE THE FORM! RECOGNIZE THE COUPLE!" - a voice from the outside, strangely not made of sound, echoed nevertheless, suddenly, across matter.

There was then a brief moment of pause in the time of this story. A moment during which Yaldabaoth Looked and Saw - for a moment he was not Samael, the blind god. A moment during which the Serpent Saw and Understood.

Yaldabaoth's copies, inorganic as they were, mere dead programmed dreams, understood, as if by a shadow instinct, what that moment outside of time represented and they knew that they would have to fulfill their survival, by any means, or they would face the unacceptable and cease to exist. They would save their Master, Yaldabaoth, the King of all these Principalities. They would save his creation.

They acted as one. Some embraced Yaldabaoth, others, the Serpent. They induced thoughts, triggered emotions and reinforced identities. Little by little, they managed to resume time, and, most importantly, to make Yaldabaoth and the Serpent forget, distracted, who that Glittering Couple was.

To the eyes of the Couple, made from Life-Light, the dead copies were but horrendous and loathsome vermin and parasites, masses of tentacles and shapeless vessels of death. And were thus defined, by the revelation of the Couple, those who would rule the world to survive. With the story moving again, the permanence of the parasites of Life was assured for longer, as they infiltrated Yaldabaoth, whom they saved from dissolution, the Serpent, whom they would keep in constant conflict from the other side, and eventually all of creation that was to yet come by their design.

Witnessing this, the Glittering Couple disappeared from matter and went beyond time and the story. They remained, however, invisible to dead eyes, inside the bodies of flesh, bone and blood that solidified in their place.

A storm invaded for the first time that garden, with the wind and the hail thrashing the plants and lifting the soil. Yaldabaoth would now apply his wrath on the new flesh that, only a few suppressed moments ago, was Living Spark.

- "You will know your Master, your Owner, your God!" - furiously, grasping at the seductive thoughts generated by his repugnant and parasitical copies, he pulled Eve away from Adam and, with a gesture, put him to sleep.

He, and through him the seed of the monsters, raped Eve's body, forcing themselves through Yaldabaoth on her, violently. The parasites sought in her the Spark they knew had found refuge in the body. Yet Eve, dreamt and mortal soul, eluded suffering and hid Life in the Crest of her Scepter, sealing it away with the lock which only Adam, while in the Living state, has the Key for.

Having sated his fury and lust, Yaldabaoth discarded Eve. Frustrated by the vain search in the woman's body, the tentacles of the worms infiltrated deeply into the blind-god's mind instead and that of his fallen dreamer.

'Above God and the Devil, above Angels and Demons, we, the Authorities of this Universe. Whomever calls for one, summons us. Whomever prays to the other, will invoke us. We will be one and as many in a single mind. We will be eternal and hidden and shall rule the guidance of man and woman, until that flame that afflicted us is eliminated and banished. This universe is ours.' - one mind spread out among countless agents, as a beehive is commanded by its Queen's directive.

IX

Sophia's Promised, watching the nightmare develop next to the Father, was then preparing to insert himself in between the lines of that story.

With Adam and Eve banished from the garden and thrown out into the intermediate earth, between the realm of Yaldabaoth and that of the Serpent, between Heaven and Hell that are, as a dreamt illusion, a single universe, the Authorities formed and killed tribes, kingdoms, empires. The driving thread in their plans, however, always remained: the incessant search to eliminate that Spark, the one that would destroy them entirely, were it ever to be awakened.

Inside time, the history of the Authorities was evolving, artificially. Perennial victors in their own created conflicts, as they induced and seduced all involved, the conquering vermin were writing their history through Man, who thought to be writing his own. Controlling both Yaldabaoth and the Gaia, both God and the Devil, in eternal and ceaseless war, they led the flesh descendants of Adam and Eve in the Great Search for the Divine Spark. They sought it, yes, yet their only purpose was to eternally muffle it. Because of that intent, every Teacher was tortured, every Saint martyred, every Prophet ostracized and persecuted. Therefore, every time the Spark manifested by being sought, they would immediately try to drown it in blood and death. The Authorities would then seek to retell the story of each Teacher, Saint and Prophet in their own fashion, who were but aspects of the Spark awakening and coming out of their control, so that the Truth was abandoned in favor of their own feeding symbols. They edited memories, rewrote books and scrolls, reinvented metaphors. No means were denied to allow the Collective's survival, which was, after all, a single titanic being, albeit inorganic and made of death. It was thus, the Parasite Collective generated within the nightmare of beautiful Sophia.

It was during one of the empires in the narrative, in one of the many provinces, among an occupied and subdued people, that the Promised entered the story of dreamt flesh with his Living mind. As he held the Key to the Dream, for he retained his qualities of

Truth and Life, having not fallen but descended, the Promised sought to alleviate the suffering of all that was flesh, all that was sickness, out of compassion for what he found in the dream, so pervaded was everything with tentacles and worms and parasites that were but automaton fragments of shadow. Miracles - claimed the people. And thus the Promised who wore a body just like theirs, when so many of them had nothing but the body they wore, as no fragment of the fallen Spark resided within, earned his fame as a miracle-worker. His sermons, to so many completely incomprehensible, held nevertheless a mesmerizing appeal, as his words contained in them the Key that would open the Lock that kept the Spark hidden.

The Living among them, on the other hand, because they had "eyes to see" and "ears to hear", arose and detached themselves from the illusions of that world, of that nightmare commanded by authoritarian parasites. The dead naturally revolted against such intrusion into their domain - they felt the threat, even though they could not see it.

The Presence of the Promised in the Illusion that imprisoned Sophia, awakened her. It brought to the surface her original Living form.

Howbeit, without absorbing and uniting all her fragments, even though she was now revived, Sophia was unable to conclude the Dream. Due to that, she manifested among mortalkind, during the time in the story in which the Promised called for her return with his mere Presence.

And that was how Magdalene met the Promised and lived together with him.

Little by little, as she sat by him, she recognized in him the presence of her Groom. In between the lines, revealed in the code of parables, she began realizing where she was, and also what caused her to be made prisoner in her own Dream. Each day in his Presence was a day she recalled another piece of her own pure existence, of her Essence.

Accordingly, then, Magdalene, who was Sophia manifest, Redeemed as she was from her previous enslaved state, Repented from her lechery and shadowy fantasies that caused

her fall, gave herself to her rightful Promised.

In the Loving manner that only the Living can experience, the Promised, her Groom, welcomed her in his arms and in his Heart, in a Union witnessed by the Living Spirit - celebrated, ironically, in the same fictitious flesh that was created in and for transgression. It was the transubstantiation of flesh into Living Bread, that would feed her into Truth, and of blood into Living Wine, that would quench her thirst for Life.

Adam's Key, through her Promised Groom, opened Eve's Lock, within Magdalene and the Spark came alive again.

Thusly, impregnated with Life, Magdalene carried within her that rekindled Sacred Fire that had been dulled to be concealed. This new Fire would burn the Archons and kindle the ones born from above, from pieces of the Living Daughter, and disquiet the ones born from below, from mere matter and automatic existence. Prayers will be raised by the Living Ones and reach beyond the exile, beseeching the Father and Mother of all Life and Truth to save their offspring from their unholy condition. These will set themselves apart from the dead and be persecuted - for death does not wish to suffer the loss of reality by allowing the escape of the fragments of the Dreamer. If they can tempt them into staying, they will. If they can pain them into compliance, they will too.

X

However, that does not tell the whole story about the arrival of Sophia's Promised. Going further back in the chain of events, so that naught remains ununderstood, hidden movements had been occurring, simultaneously, that affected the Dream's resolution. It is now time to reveal them.

The Promised, as he manifested, sought Yaldabaoth, summoned him to the earth. Knowledgeable of the nature of that unhinged Shadow, he knew how to attract him, how to make the trap he laid out an irresistible temptation for his kind. He first found a deserted place and fasted there intensely, to make his body weak, showing himself vulnerable before the shadowy side of his Bride.

"Yaldabaoth! Here I am. Come to me!" - he yelled at the heavens.

That unforgettable visage that had been engraved in his memory, by the bolt of lightning that had pictured it in a flash, presented itself, at last. He seemed in a deplorable state, kneeling, emaciated, vulnerable, no more or less than any other man under his scourge. It had been the ideal bait for Yaldabaoth and his tentacled Archon manipulators. A perfect device for the dream confrontation and resolution could occur. Yaldabaoth then descended and appeared before the manifestation of the Promised, Son of the Father, in the desert.

"Ah! Here you are, after all. I expected more of you, such was the form of your previous presentation... yet here you are, after all; mortal, moribund, under the influence of the laws of MY KINGDOM! AT MY MERCY!" - the Shadow proudly addressed him.

"And here are both Samael, the blind god, and his Archon controller, all in one, right in front of me." - the Promised replied.

"Now, now! How could I allow myself to skip this opportunity to meet the one who had been introduced to me as my better, my superior?" - he approaches his dark, burning, eyes - "I am not impressed, however. You probably do not eat a bit of food for a long time. You see, here you have to consume others to keep that body of yours. That was the curse your kind laid upon my kingdom's creation, remember?" - he rises again and

clenches his fists - "You thought it would be easy to come down to my kingdom, did you? I AM IN CHARGE HERE!" - his contorted features revealed anger - "Come then! Show me that superiority of yours! Let's see..." - Yaldabaoth grabs a handful of small rocks from the ground - "Here, turn these rocks into bread, so that you can properly feed and be present before me with some dignity!"

The Promised responded with a smile - "Even these frail bodies you put together do not feed solely on bread. Some also feed on the Truth that emanates from the Life hiding within them."

Irate, Yaldabaoth clutched him in his arms and tore him out of the ground, flying up to the sky.

"Do you, by any chance, believe that my realm is to be scoffed at?! Come then!! Show me!! If I drop you from all the way up here, among the clouds that are the roof of the temple to my worship, will you be able to accomplish the miracle of sustaining such a fall? Show me the miracle of your superiority!!"

"Drop me, if it pleases you." - he answered calmly - "Yet know that Truth and Life are not trialed or tested: they purely ARE, indestructible, and simple once revealed."

Yaldabaoth grinned then - "Ah! Courage! I appreciate that. Even as a weakling at my mercy you show bravery in the presence of your master!"

"You are not my master." - the Promised retorted.

"So should I become, then!" - the Shadow smiled intensely as a duelist on the verge of victory - "Promise to worship me and to follow my designs and I will make of you my most important representative!" - he turned him to view the lands below - "Behold! Survey the empires and kingdoms I gave to men! You shall be ruler of them all! A proper King, a proper Emperor! Come, accept your evident defeat, for you are weakest here, and become my servant, by swearing fealty to me!"

"I serve, solely, Truth and Life, being a Son to them. I decline your proposal, but, in exchange, will make you an offer you cannot refuse." - at that moment, the Promised eyes glittered with the same Spark that Yaldabaoth knew so well.

He dropped him but the Promised floated and did not fall. - "HOW?!"

The Promised then opened his arms and commanded Yaldabaoth to his body. He swallowed the Shadow whole and the Archon controller together with it. There, inside the Son's manifestation, hidden, but observing first hand the existence in the story that

the Promised had come to retell.

"You shall experience, within this body, both the Glory of Life, to purify you in its Fire, and also the defeat of death, which is your nature." - the Promised proclaimed.

XI

Since then, every miracle, every sermon, and even, his union with Magdalene, who is Sophia, had been experienced by Yaldabaoth and the Archon masters, bound as they were to that sentience by the Sacred Fire of the Promised.

It was then that one of his disciples was chosen for a double strike. He, who followed the miracle worker along his trails, step by step, unaware of who was trapped within his teacher, was chosen to allow the ending of the story to come to pass.

Judas was, from among his closest, the most spiritually inclined and sure to be saved, as he would recognize him when the time came. He was the one who most seemed to understand his message, second only to Magdalene, the redeemed Sophia, herself. He was, because of that, the right character to play this part in the Dream narrative's finale.

Knowing then that the ending was close at hand, the Promised needed to set a piece in motion, to conclude the destiny of the tale. Thusly, he gathered around him his most intimate circle in one last supper.

- "One of you, whom I have elected to accompany me, will betray me." - he said during the meal.

A great bustle arose among his most faithful disciples, one of disbelief, one of incredulity. Peter, who was, among them, the most insecure and the most intimidated by temptation, feared that his teacher was referring to himself.

- "What say you, sir? Which one of us?" - he asked, trembling for the response.

- "The one I offer this morsel and takes it, that will be the one." - the Promised dipped the morsel in the sauce and imbued in it the Spark that, he knew, would be recognized by the Serpent, the fallen Sophia.

He offered it to Judas. The air grew heavy all of a sudden, in expectation for what was to follow.

In a single second of time, but in a timeless instant in the realm of Truth, the teacher stared at Judas and spoke to him in his mind.

'Take it, Judas, this burden I offer. This is the Key that will unlock the doors to Life. Accept it and you will SEE me, you will see the hardship I took upon myself to bear in this world. You will then realize what must be done.'

Judas took the piece of food into his hand and ate it.

At that very instant, invisible to the dead eyes of the others, as it manifested beyond the Dream veil, a glittering took over Judas. From her cavernous throne, whither she had been banished, the Serpent awoke and sensed something summoning her. Without time or space, her presence before Judas occurs immediately.

- "Who are you to wear the Tunic of my Groom?" - she asked, still in amazement.
- "I am Judas, follower of the one who cures the diseased, feeds the hungry and offers water to the thirsty." - he replied, with the clarity offered by the Glittering Fountain that now occupied him - "He gave me, just a man, his Sacred Fire, so that the ending to the story could finally be written."
- "My Promised has no ending. The story, however... yes, to end it would be Liberation."
- she hesitated - "Is there a way?"
- "As he promised, I see what has to be done." - Judas replied.
- "Tell me!" - the Serpent was growing impatient.

Judas' response was merely to stare at her, calmly, as tranquil as he learned to set himself by the Promised teachings, and smile.

- "Answer me! Answer me now or you will suffer my venomous power!" - the disfigured wrath of the Serpent, grotesque manifestation of an aspect of Sophia in her Dream, was inflamed.

Not another word from Judas. Merely that same constant smile. Was he mocking her? Mocking her power and wrath was a challenge too daring to be ignored. Clearly her beloved foe Yaldabaoth had found a new way to torment her. Her hatred for Yaldabaoth remained! Her love for Yaldabaoth persisted!

Consumed now by the defiance in that glimmering smile, the Serpent cast herself and bit Judas. At that very instant, she was absorbed wholly into the Spark and, suddenly,

found herself seeing through his eyes and thinking with his thoughts.

Back in the Dream, after having swallowed the offered morsel, Judas nodded to the miracle worker, his teacher.

The Promised told him then, for everyone to hear - "What you have to do, do it quickly." A Revelation took place there and then: they saw, chained to their teacher, Yaldabaoth and the Archon's tentacles, both helpless and vulnerable.

Judas, who was with his fragment of Life alongside the bound Serpent, knew what had to be done. He stood up and left, toward the temple of the religion of the Archon parasites, that had long been seeking excuses to go after the miracle worker that belittled them.

- "Our dilemma is not finding him" - Caiaphas said to Judas - "but to find proper motives for the arrest. This impostor and agent of profanation is charismatic and has attracted too many followers. We must avoid revolt at all costs."

- "I did not come to you, most holy high priest, to disclose a location that you can so easily find, given your power and connections." - Judas replies, serenely - "I came to offer you exactly the reason you require to move against him."

- "And what reason might that be?" - the high priest inquired.

Judas inhales deeply - "This man is an impostor, who turns the unwary away from our divine law. He is concerned for the poor people in our society? He appears to be, yet at the same time he generates more poor, as he convinces any new disciple to leave behind all property and possessions. Then, he preaches celibacy and abandoning carnal pleasures, those that our god so generously offered us in our bodies, but his favorite disciple is a woman - a harlot, I must add - who shares his blanket every night. He accepts to be massaged and comforted by expensive ointments, instead of commanding that the money is used to help the poor... or offered as donation to the Temple of God."

- "I still do not uncover a legal motive in what you have said, Judas." - Caiaphas responds - "We need some transgression, something illegal, maybe a crime, so that we may then visibly, officially and publicly proceed with the conviction. All that you have mentioned, we already knew."

Judas grins - "All of what I have said, however, is mere context to the true blasphemy he commits: he presents himself as the Messiah of our people."

Caiaphas now nods, finally understanding the line of thought - "The Messiah will liberate our people, guide it to victory over our enemies. The Messiah will fight the Empire so that the Empire is ours. He will never lead the people astray. That is blasphemy."

- "There you have it." - Judas agrees, still keeping appearances.
- "On those grounds, we may detain him and punish him, yes, but I consider that such boldness and disrespect deserves that the problem is resolved in a more... permanent fashion." - Caiaphas eyes are now lit with hate - "For that, we have the Empire."

A few scheming silent moments later, the high priest concludes then - "You will have your reward, Judas, for your service to God. Go to your blasphemous teacher and make sure everything is in order for us to proceed. Remember that we do not want to cause any commotion. When you confirm that the moment is adequate, kiss him on the cheek and that will be our signal to advance and our guards will arrest him."

Judas nods affirmatively.

- "Then, the Empire will tend to the rest on our behalf." - Caiaphas had his mind submerged in Archontic planning and suggestion.
- "We shall meet then in the garden I have mentioned to you." - and Judas departs immediately.

In the garden, his disciples are sleeping, satiated by the supper they had together, already distracted from the exchange that had occurred with Judas. The disciple that had been chosen to set in motion the chain of events, having returned from his meeting with the priests of the Archons, approaches. He halts before the Promised, who is awake, sitting in contemplation, waiting for him. Judas stares at him, as if asking if he should still proceed with the part he was given. The Promised smiled at him warmly, offering comfort to his brother in Life, who was given such a hard role. Judas was reassured; he knows what dwells, bound, inside his teacher and he knows that this is the will of a sequence of events that only he can trigger.

Encouraging him, the Promised helps him to proceed, by asking him a question, smiling - "Judas, will you betray me with a kiss?"

Judas, not only realizing the permission but also the necessity, steps forward and kisses his cheek, signaling the captors to advance.

As he did so, he feels as if a heavy load just left him. With his Living eyes he saw that the Serpent had left him through the kiss and joined the same prison as Yaldabaoth and the tentacled Archon, inside the Promised hero. Judas stared at him in amazement - how could he be so calm bearing in him such burden, unscathed?

The disciples suddenly awaken at the bustle in alarm and position themselves defensively around their teacher. However, he, Sophia's Promised, immediately soothes them and requests of them that no resistance be exerted to his arrest. After all, unbeknownst to them, his plan was already set in motion.

XII

"His proposition is an insurrection against the Empire! He calls himself Messiah and liberator, but he is merely a man, corrupted by thoughts of rebellion!" - Caiaphas presents again his argument to Pilate.

"The Empire will not get involved in matters of a religious nature." - the Governor tells him, knowing full well the intent of the High Priest - "This Messiah you teach about in your temple, is he supposed to be anything else? Perhaps this is your god! So worship him!"

Caiaphas, who had already ordered his best speakers to exact the denunciation of the blasphemies of the Promised among the people, to convince the crowd that they had been made fools of, then decides to take the argument to the next level, in order to convince Pilate.

He approaches the Governor and addresses him somberly - "If you do not execute this traitor, you will have a rebellion in your hands. A revolt such as none have seen before, one that is uncontrollable, neither by your army nor by ourselves, the priests."

"Is that a threat?" - the Governor's eyes glare challengingly.

"No, far from me such nefarious intent. I merely state the facts. Show the prisoner to the crowd outside and let them reveal their intent." - he then turns to the prisoner and speaks to the room, audibly - "He has made promises that are not his to make, but God's! As he failed to keep them, the people are unforgiving!"

The prisoner, containing in himself both Yaldabaoth and the Serpent in panic, simply smiles.

"Bring the prisoner over to the balcony." - Pilate commands his guard, who obeys - "Anything to say in your defense?" - he asks.

"There is nothing to defend. It is of no consequence to try to alter what is in course, but I bless you for your attempted compassion." - the prisoner scanned Pilate and saw that a fragment of the Spark had taken refuge in him.

The Governor then turned to the terrace and brought the prisoner there, holding his arm. He announced: "Here you have the man!"

And the crowds fury, instigated successfully by the temple's orators, was then manifest towards the one that, until then, many had admitted to admire and even love.

Pilate looked at the prisoner - "I am left with no choice..."

"Rest at ease, Pilate. It was never your decision. You are merely playing a part in an ending to the dream." - the Promised told him - "You may wash your hands of my blood and any guilt, for you have none."

The whip comes and goes, tearing away at the skin and flesh, creasing with pain the body of three.

- "Is this pain enough for you, Yaldabaoth?"

- "I damn you! You have deceived me! Betrayed me!"

- "No, I gave you what you wanted, what you asked for."

- "I offered you a position as my servant and you made me a slave to suffering."

- "Have you not refused to be a servant just as well? Yet, I am True. You realize now that everything suffers in here, me, you, Sophia, everyone. This place you have made her create for you is composed of pain, your pain, oh Shadow, but also comprised of time. Therefore, in time, you suffering this here with me in this frail body, is your opportunity to return to the Glory of your Mother and, through her, the Father of Truth."

- "Accursed one! I refuse to capitulate! I am the King of the World!"

- "You will die without death dissolving you. That is the curse you lay upon yourself until the day you redeem, Shadow!"

- "And me, why inflict upon me this torment? I whose only sin was to love!"

- "Oh Serpent, you are as much Shadow as your obsession. He cursed you and overpowered you because you are made of the same death. You have loved not, but lusted in desire."

- "And that lust makes you condemn me to this torture?! You are as much a villain as Yaldabaoth!"

- "I am merely the vehicle of your reunion, which must occur. It was you both, not me or the Father, who generated pain and suffering and fear as means of creation. Everything that is created invariably turns against its creators. Return to your uncreated state, as the True mistress you belong to has, and you will, again, be free. I

am here and I suffer alongside you, is there any greater fellowship I can offer?"

- "I just wanted to love!"

- "Your Truth has loved and loves now in Timelessness. You have already been redeemed, because the ending has already been enacted where time has no existence. My beloved Sophia, you have repented, been redeemed and saved, and are my betrothed in Life!"

- "What must I do?! What do you want of me?!"

- "When the time comes in the narrative, embrace Yaldabaoth, embrace the other half of the Shadow that you both are, so that you may be reunited and presented back to my bride, as the pearl garland she retrieved for her own wedding!"

- "He cursed me and I shall not yield to him! I shall suffer your body but will not suffer that ignominy!"

- "Should that be your decision, you too will die and not taste peace until you provide your own redemption, Shadow!"

- "Enough! That will be enough! We want him to last a few days on the hill." - the Sargent of the guard commands - "Place the cross on his shoulder! I want him nailed and crucified on the hill before sunset!"

And thus it came to pass.

Crucified, with the death of form approaching, the Shadows bound in the manifestation that the Promised had emanated to contain them, contemplate, for the first time, the agony of extinction - as they were, like all false concepts and forms, addicted to maintaining their resemblance of existence.

In the mist of their consciousness, as their forms grow weaker, the Promised emerges from the fog of formlessness, one last time, embraced to Magdalene, who is Sophia redeemed and saved.

- "You will die, here and now, but be not freed." - the Promised told the Shadows.

- "Whenever you truly wish for the peace that eludes you to finally arise in you, seek each other. Yaldabaoth, allow the Serpent you cursed to strike her fangs and inject you with her venom. Serpent, permit yourself to be held and embraced by your obsessive passion and strike it true. Your fusion, like that of Ophiuchus, the Serpent-Bearer, of

Apollo and Python at Delphi, in timeless embrace, will be the sign that will trigger your return to the Source. Peace will reign there." - Sophia, as Magdalene, revealed to them.

- "I will never accept such ignominious fate!" - Yaldabaoth resists - "I exist! I exist by myself! Independent! I am the King of the World! I am God!"

- "There shall be no embrace and no love bite with a treacherous arrogance such as yours, my beloved! You will never again hold me in your arms!"

The pain and agony of dissolution appear to finally overcome everything else. The Promised and Sophia ascend. They are set free, as the brave and pure champion saved his damsel in distress.

So familiar is the Serpent with suffering, that when she is left back in the pain and death of that torment, surrounded by such lower forms of men and women, her last thought is one of unexpected remission towards the beings she created - "Forgive them, Father and Son and Daughter... for they know not what they do."

Yaldabaoth is left alone, abandoned, without subjects to rule, only the crowd of his creation around him, cheering and rejoicing at his agony. With no last resort to offer as resistance, he is left solely with pleas for clemency - "Ascended Mother, Woman, Lover, why have you forsaken me?"

And cessation touches both.

XIII

- "You are safe back here now, I have to go back."

- "My Love, forgive me. I know now that my error damned much Life to death." - Sophia answers her Promised, as they rest well beyond the Nightmare. - "I too will go back, even if only to remain at the border, to receive back the fragments of my Life that fell for my arrogant transgression. Also, to await your return, my Love, that you have saved me from perdition. As long as you remain in the story, in the dream, in the nightmare of hellish realms my Shadows created, I shall await your return at the door, peeking out the window, listening for the familiar footsteps, longing for your timeless embrace with roses for perfume and kisses to sweeten lips and smiling eyes to wash away weariness of the hardships you took up on my behalf."

Her Promised Groom smiles. Sophia took responsibility for her Shadows, yet these still animated the world of Time she had generated to house them. As long as pieces of her Life were still harnessed therein, by their will, there would be Nightmare. The story would repeat itself countless times until all the fragments of her Spark were returned to her.

Thusly, the Promised released her hand and descended as a bolt of lightning into the hell that is matter. Blazing Spear in hand and mirrored Shield close to his chest, he burst through its gates and folded the world to his will. He pierced his way through an army of tentacles, that dissolved before the infallible Truth of his might. His feet trampled the masses of aberrant death that plotted against Life, for their survival within the realm of the Dream.

Many of the Living fragments then recognized him, beholding him with eyes of Truth they themselves awakened. Those fled to his arms, to return Home, yet many others, remaining confused in their perceived narrow existence in the form, remained behind, blind as they persisted.

- "Fear not, my brethren, fear not! You, shards of Life that see me not, that are blind yet to the realization of your Living quality, so besmirched as you are with death, will not be left abandoned. I will return from timelessness; in between the time of the dream that has ended and the time of the dream about to start again, at that Moment, see me

and come to me, for I will lead you back Home."

The Promise remained, echoed as it was across the hell that is matter. The Promise remained and was kept, as in the Moments when the dream ends and before it recommences, the Promised is manifest and collects his Living Brothers!

When all of the Living fragments are counted among Life and all of the dead, separated, are dissolved in death - which will then be when Yaldabaoth and the Serpent unite in an embrace of Peace and cessation - then fully to Life, timeless, Pure and True existence, a new daughter returns:

Sophia, wise and beautiful, responsible and serene.